

Hitchcock City Parks: Mitigating NPS Pollution with Green Infrastructure

CMP Grants Program Cycle #28
AGREEMENT NO. 24-022-009-E018

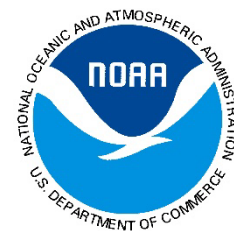


FINAL REPORT
JUNE 2026

Prepared By: Green Infrastructure for Texas within the
Disaster Assessment and Recovery Mitigation Branch,
a program of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



DISASTER ASSESSMENT
AND RECOVERY



This report was funded in part by a Texas Coastal Management Program grant approved by the Texas Land Commissioner, providing financial assistance under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, awarded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management, pursuant to NOAA Award No. **NA23NOS4190249**. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, or any of their subagencies.

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AGREEMENT NO. 24-022-009-E018 | 1

Project Background:

Rapid growth brings opportunities for economic prosperity; however, it can also have undesirable environmental impacts, such as degrading native habitat and water quality. One way to lessen the negative impacts of development is to incorporate green infrastructure practices. Green infrastructure is one of twelve management measures prioritized to improve water quality and coastal habitats in the Environmental Protection Agency-approved Highland Bayou Coastal Basin Watershed Protection Plan (WPP). The City has long engaged in WPP activities, from planning through implementation and is listed as a likely lead entity in the plan.

The City's ongoing commitment to sustainable development is reflected in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan, which lists sustainability as a core value and frames resilient design strategies for parks, neighborhoods, and public spaces. Green infrastructure projects, such as rain gardens and vegetated buffers, not only reduce non-point source pollution by holding and filtering stormwater on-site, but also foster native plant communities that provide habitat for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife while requiring less maintenance than traditional lawns. By installing these gardens, the City aims to reduce runoff pollution to Highland Bayou and the Highland Bayou Diversion Canal, improving water quality and enhancing coastal habitats.

Through close collaboration with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's Green Infrastructure for Texas (GIFT) staff, within the Disaster Assessment and Recovery Unit Mitigation Branch, and support from the Texas GLO Coastal Management Program, the City leveraged technical expertise and funding to implement green infrastructure demonstration projects in its public parks. These installations were paired with community outreach and education initiatives, positioning Hitchcock as a regional leader in sustainable practices and providing practical examples for both public and private property owners. This project demonstrates the practical benefits of nature-based stormwater management, drives community engagement, and advances Hitchcock's role in building a resilient, sustainable Galveston County for the future.

Task 1 Summary: Engineering and Design

The GIFT project coordinator organized bi-monthly planning meetings with City staff, advancing the project through design and preparation for three green infrastructure installations in Hitchcock city parks. Stakeholder collaboration, with landscape architecture expertise provided by Asakura Robinson and the GIFT team, ensured that practices and locations were chosen based on natural drainage features and anticipated phasing of broader parks improvements.

Designs were developed and positioned to allow space around all garden edges for zero-turn mower access, supporting both maintenance and site aesthetics. Throughout the design phase, landscape architect expertise ensured alignment with regional stormwater guidance and City priorities.

Green Infrastructure Installations

- **Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens:** Two rain gardens (340 square feet and 370 square feet) designed to capture, slow, and infiltrate stormwater, using native plants to filter runoff and enhance habitat.
- **Hitchcock City Park Vegetated Buffer:** A 590 square foot vegetated buffer strategically placed to filter stormwater and stabilize soil, also positioned for efficient maintenance.

Site preparation and construction methods were discussed and refined in partnership with City staff, aligning with sustainable stormwater practices.

This foundational engineering and design phase set the stage for successful construction, installation, and long-term function of the native gardens and vegetated buffer in Hitchcock parks, contributing to improved water quality, pollinator habitat, and landscape resilience

Completed activities:

- Bi-monthly project planning meetings (17 total) with City staff
- Practice types and locations determined
- Approvals and MOU with City Council
- Landscape architect RFQ, selection, and executed agreement
- Draft (50%) and final (100%) designs for green infrastructure installation

Task 2 Summary: Construction and Signage

In partnership with the City of Hitchcock, GIFT coordinated the installation of two rain gardens and one vegetated buffer, along with interpretive signage consistent with GLO's Clean Coast Texas initiative.

With support from Hitchcock Public Works, site preparation involved removing existing lawn grass before either excavating and replacing soil amended with compost or tilling compost directly into the existing soil, depending on the practice. A border of bull rock and aluminum edging was installed to create a clear visual boundary and help prevent lawn encroachment into the garden. At Hitchcock City Park, five large moss boulders (ranging from 0.7 to 2.95 tons) were placed on either side of the buffer to further define the edges and support maintenance efforts. In-kind assistance from the City, valued at \$14,000, included staff time for project planning, coordination of resources, and equipment use. Streets and drainage staff managed excavated soil from the site, mixed compost with soil, installed aluminum edging with bull rock fill, placed the boulders, and moved prepared soil into the garden areas. City staff supported materials delivery and operated all necessary equipment.

A total of 279 native plants were installed across three gardens during two volunteer planting events, which also featured an orientation and project overview. Participants learned about native garden practices and their benefits while helping establish the new installations.

Plants Installed

Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens

Blazing Star Bee Balm, *Liatris spp.*
Jacob Cline Bee Balm, *Monarda didyma*
Juncus Blue Dart, *Juncus tenuis*
Little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*
Louisiana Iris, *Iris hexagona*
Gulf Coast/Brazos Penstemon, *Penstemon tenuis*
Possumhaw holly, *Ilex decidua*
Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*
Regal Mist Muhly, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*
Texas Spider Lily, *Hymenocallis liriosme*
Texas Star Hibiscus, *Hibiscus coccineus*

Hitchcock City Park Vegetated Buffer

Autumn Sage, *Salvia greggii*
Black Eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia hirta*
Dwarf palmetto, *Sabal minor*
Gregg's Mistflower, *Eupatorium greggii*
Montezuma Cypress, *Taxodium mucronatum*
Purple Heart, *Tradescantia pallida*
Regal Mist Muhly, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*
Texas Spider Lily, *Hymenocallis liriosme*
Texas Star Hibiscus, *Hibiscus coccineus*

Planting Events - Joe Moore Park Gardens and Hitchcock City Park

Volunteer planting events were held at both Joe Moore Park and Hitchcock City Park during the first weekend of April 2025. On April 4, 2025, nine volunteers added plants and mulch to complete the rain gardens at Joe Moore Park. The following day, April 5, 2025, six volunteers participated in adding native plants and mulch in the vegetated buffer at Hitchcock City Park. Due to heavy rain in the forecast for that weekend, additional watering was not necessary.

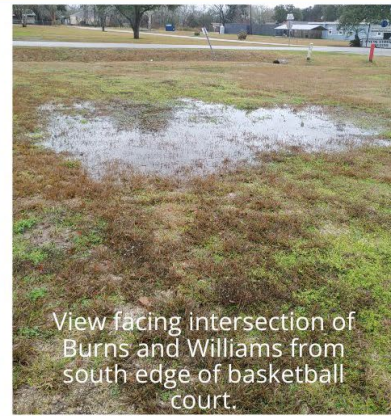
Completed activities:

- Special Award Condition (SAC) release following review of construction methods
- City floodplain permit
- Plant and materials selection, delivery, and staging
- Site preparation in advance of planting events
- Volunteer planting events (final installation step) on April 4 and 5, 2025
- Interpretive signage design and installation

Before, during, and after photos of construction

Joe Moore Park, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas

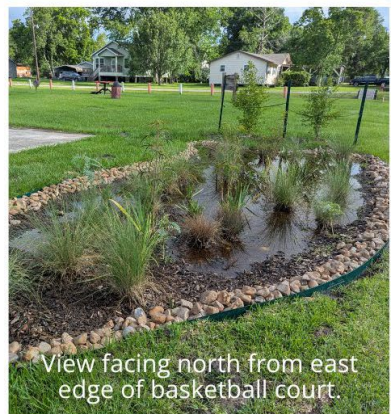
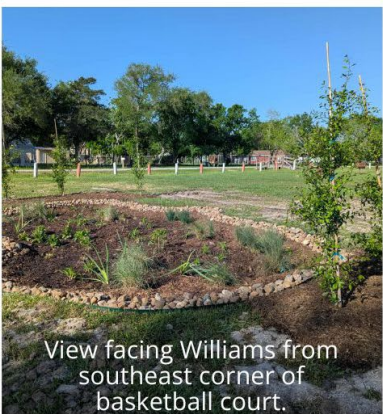
BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

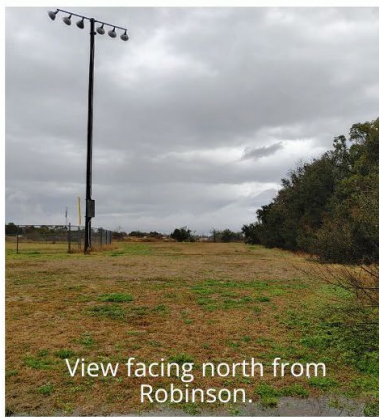


Hitchcock City Park, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas

BEFORE



View facing northeast from the southeast corner of the park on Robinson.



View facing north from Robinson.



View facing northwest from the western most entry driveway.

DURING



View facing west/southwest toward Robinson.

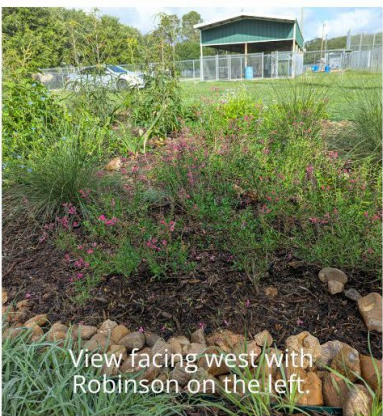


View facing northeast from south side of the vegetated buffer.



View facing northeast from south side of the vegetated buffer.

AFTER



View facing west with Robinson on the left.



View facing north from Robinson.



View facing south/southeast toward Robinson

Installed interpretive signage and CMP permanent signs

Two educational signs were installed: a “Welcome to our Rain Garden” sign at Joe Moore Park and a “Welcome to our Vegetated Buffer” sign at Hitchcock City Park. Originally, one sign was planned for each green infrastructure installation, but with two adjacent rain gardens added in Joe Moore Park, the project team also placed plant identification labels at all three practices. Each sign measures 18 inches high by 24 inches wide and is mounted on a single post pedestal.

Joe Moore Park, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas



Hitchcock City Park, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas



Welcome to our Rain Garden

A rain garden is a bowl-shaped, planted area designed to collect, absorb and filter stormwater, or rainwater, that runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and streets.

How does a rain garden work?
Stormwater from impervious surfaces is directed into the rain garden. This slows the flow and gives it a chance to soak into the soil. As the stormwater moves through the rain garden, the soil, plants and mulch filter-out pollutants. Any stormwater leaving the rain garden is cleaner as it enters the drainage system or nearest body of water.

What plants can be used?
Native plants adapted to periods of both wet and dry conditions are best. Using native plants also helps to create a beautiful wildlife habitat.



Rain Garden in Action

Native trees, shrubs and perennials

Stormwater inflow

Temporary ponding area

Mulch

Compost-enriched soil mix

Stormwater infiltration

What about mosquitoes?
When installed correctly, rain gardens do not collect standing water. In fact, they are designed to drain quickly, preventing mosquitoes from breeding. Mosquitoes need standing water to breed, so rain gardens are not a breeding ground.

How will a rain garden help?
Rain gardens protect water quality by helping to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff. At the same time, less water is lost as runoff - more of the stormwater remains where it falls. A rain garden is an attractive landscape feature that can be placed on almost any property that drains well or where soil can be amended.



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Welcome to our Vegetated Buffer

A vegetated buffer is a section of land with native plants that is relatively flat with a low slope that slows and filters stormwater, or rainwater, that runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and streets.

How does a vegetated buffer work?
Stormwater flows across the land and into the vegetated buffer. This slows the flow and allows it to soak into the soil. As the stormwater moves through the vegetated buffer, the soil, plants, and mulch filter-out pollutants. Any stormwater leaving the vegetated buffer is cleaner as it enters the drainage system or nearest body of water.

What plants can be used?
Native plants that thrive in both wet and moist soil are best. Using native plants also provides food and shelter for local wildlife.



Vegetated Buffer

Stormwater flow

Native plants

Infiltration

What about mosquitoes?
When installed correctly, vegetated buffers do not collect standing water. In fact, they are designed to drain quickly, preventing mosquitoes from breeding. Mosquitoes need standing water to breed, so vegetated buffers are not a breeding ground.

How will a vegetated buffer help?
Vegetated buffers protect water quality by helping remove pollutants from stormwater runoff. Water is also encouraged to soak into the soil, so more of the stormwater remains where it falls. A vegetated buffer is an attractive landscape feature that can be placed on almost any property with a shallow slope and room for vegetation.



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Task 3 Summary: Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance was supported through the development of a comprehensive guide and hands-on training for six City Streets and Drainage staff. The guide includes sections on general maintenance best practices, site visit preparation, garden-specific plant lists, a recommended inspection and maintenance schedule, routine site visits conducted by staff to monitor garden performance and address needs, and a garden location map. Resources such as the GIFT Rain Garden Plant List, local supplier contacts, guidance on interpretive sign care, and background information on green infrastructure in Hitchcock City Parks are incorporated for reference.

Routine maintenance activities, such as weeding, mulching, and plant care, not only ensure garden health and appearance, but also keep rain gardens functioning as natural filters for stormwater, helping to trap and break down pollutants before they enter local waterways. Native plants selected for these gardens help reduce maintenance needs and support deep roots and healthy soils, fostering resilient landscapes and providing food and shelter for pollinators, while requiring less upkeep than traditional lawn areas.

Routine site visits and maintenance activities were conducted by GIFT staff through May 2026. The maintenance training event held at Joe Moore Park and Hitchcock City Park provided staff with experience in watering, weeding, pruning, replanting, and mulching, as well as familiarization with inspection procedures. Throughout the project, several events were organized to engage community members with the gardens, many of which incorporated hands-on maintenance activities. These maintenance activities were intentionally included in outreach events to foster practical skills, community stewardship, and ongoing awareness about native garden care.

Water access for maintenance was addressed at each site: Joe Moore Park had a temporary water hose available during the initial establishment phase. Hitchcock City Park required two 150-foot hoses and a hose cart to reach the spigot located over 250 feet from the vegetated buffer, ensuring that newly installed plants received essential watering as they established and throughout ongoing garden care.

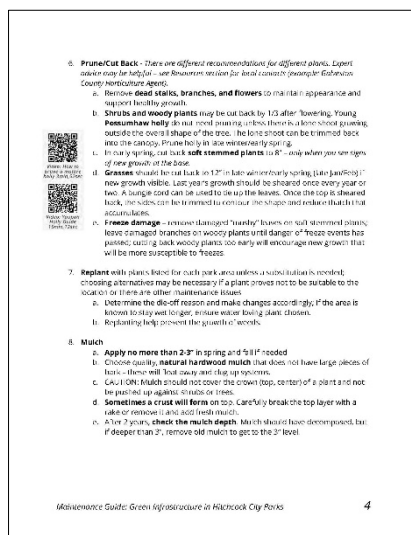
A post-construction evaluation was performed about 13 months after installation, supporting sustained performance of the gardens by Asakura Robinson during the May 8, 2026 Garden Visit and Maintenance event described in the Outreach section below. As part of this evaluation, soil sampling and infiltration tests were conducted to monitor soil health and water absorption, supporting long-term garden performance.

Completed activities:

- Maintenance guide development
- Hands-on maintenance training, September 17, 2025
- Routine site visits and maintenance by GIFT staff through May 2026
- Post-Construction Evaluation, May 8, 2026

A comprehensive maintenance guide was developed to support ongoing care of the rain gardens and vegetated buffer at Hitchcock city parks. The guide provides clear instructions and resources for City Streets and Drainage staff, covering best practices for garden upkeep, including watering, weeding, mulching, pruning, replanting, and inspection procedures. It includes garden-specific plant lists, a recommended schedule for maintenance and inspection, and a map of garden locations.

This maintenance guide is intended as a practical tool that encourages regular site visits, fosters stewardship, and sustains healthy, attractive gardens that improve water quality and add beauty to Hitchcock’s parks.

[illegible]

RAIN GARDEN PLANT LIST
Joe Moore Park - 7007 Williams Street, Hitchcock, Texas

 Common Name Yellow-flowered Canna • <i>Ilex, shrub</i> • 10' x 24" • wet soil • height 12' (tree)	 Pittosporum holly <i>Olea decandra</i> "Pae" • tree • 10' high • 7-10'	 Ilex x ilicifolia <i>Robusta exoniensis</i> • shrub • 10' high • 10' x 10'	 Angel bluffs <i>Suff. shrubby</i> <i>Medinilla speciosa</i> • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2'
 Juncus x bluffs <i>Juncus</i> • grass • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10'	 Lilium x bluffs <i>Lilium x bluffs</i> • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10'	 Lilium x bluffs <i>Lilium x bluffs</i> • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10'	 White spiky <i>Suff. shrubby</i> <i>Medinilla speciosa</i> • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2'
 Purple coneflower <i>Colchicum purpureum</i> • perennial • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2'	 Shrub x bluffs <i>Lilium x bluffs</i> • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10'	 Self-Crossed <i>Medinilla speciosa</i> • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2' • 2' x 2'	 Lilium x bluffs <i>Lilium x bluffs</i> • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10' • 10' x 10'

This rain garden is a sunken, flat bottomed garden bed that collects and treats stormwater runoff from the park.

Hands-On Maintenance Training Event | September 17, 2025

Six City Streets and Drainage staff participated in a hands-on maintenance training, visiting both rain gardens at Joe Moore Park and the vegetated buffer at Hitchcock City Park. As staff toured the gardens, discussions and Q&A unfolded organically, focusing on practical maintenance strategies and sharing gardening experience. Participants explored how the gardens were designed to improve water quality and provide habitat for pollinators, observing native species adapted to wet and dry conditions that support resilient landscapes with deep roots and reduced maintenance needs.

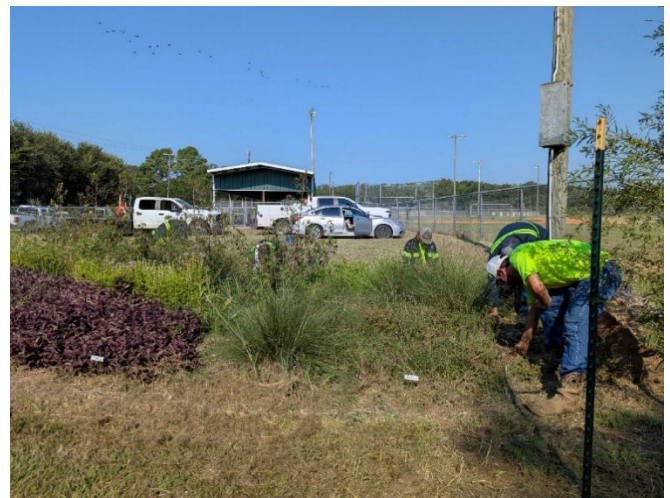
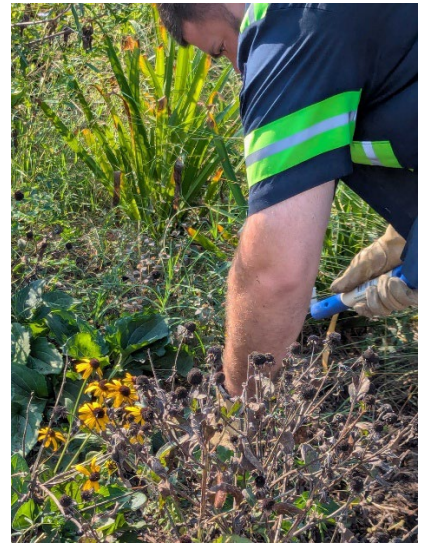
Throughout the training, team members demonstrated essential care techniques, including weeding, watering, mulching, and pruning. Special attention was given to mowing practices—staff discussed the importance of avoiding zero-turn mowers blowing cut grass into the gardens, as this can contribute to weed issues. The interactive format allowed staff to ask questions and share feedback, reinforcing the value of thoughtful maintenance in sustaining garden health and function.

The event encouraged ongoing stewardship of the gardens, equipping staff with the knowledge and skills needed to maintain native plant installations that provide beauty, wildlife benefits, and improved water quality for the community.

Joe Moore Park, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas



Hitchcock City Park, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas



Maintenance Training Sign-in Sheet

Green Infrastructure in Hitchcock City Parks

Date: 9.17.25

Location: Joe Moore Park and Hitchcock City Park (baseball fields)

Name	Title	Organization
Landen Slawson	Maintenance Worker	City of Hitchcock
Kyle Wineinger	Maintenance Worker	City of Hitchcock
Tyrone Ogle	Maintenance Worker	City of Hitchcock
C. L. Jr.	Maintenance Worker	City of Hitchcock
Paulo Corder	Street Supervisor	City of Hitchcock
Lane Simpson	Equipment Operator	City of Hitchcock
Celina Gauthier-Louvy	Extension Program Specialist	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Mike Jimenez	Extension Assistant	Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Post-Construction Evaluation | May 8, 2026

Thirteen months after installation, Asakura Robinson conducted a post-construction evaluation of the Joe Moore Park rain gardens and Hitchcock City Park's vegetated buffer. The assessment included site observations, plant health checks, soil sampling, and infiltration tests to monitor stormwater absorption and overall garden performance. Soil test results recommend applying 1.4 lbs nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft using organic fertilizers such as compost; phosphorus-containing fertilizers should be avoided in areas with elevated soil phosphorus, and annual retesting is advised. Key actions for ongoing maintenance include:

- Routine inspections to monitor water drainage, plant health, and soil condition
- Amending soil and adjusting drainage as needed
- Planting additional deep-rooted native species to improve infiltration and resilience
- Maintaining a healthy, layered soil profile
- Periodically verifying infiltration (every 1–2 years or after major maintenance)
- Replacing vegetation and monitoring coverage for long-term garden health

These steps support robust stormwater management, wildlife habitat, and landscape resilience.



Task 4 Summary: Outreach

The outreach component of the project was designed to engage City staff, officials, community stakeholders, local organizations, and students in learning about and supporting green infrastructure practices in Hitchcock and surrounding communities. This effort featured a Green Infrastructure in Landscaping workshop with a multi-speaker agenda, targeting both municipal staff and the broader community and offering presentations on stormwater management, green infrastructure practices, as well as information about the construction and operation of these installations.

A series of events and resources, including the educational workshop, a field day event held about six months after construction, and interactive activities, demonstrated the benefits of native gardens for pollinator habitat, water quality, and resilient landscapes. Practical information about the specific practices installed in the parks was shared through a fact sheet, developed for this project, and made available at the field day event and online. Through hands-on activities, informative tours, and partnerships with regional stakeholders, outreach efforts fostered awareness, practical skills, and ongoing community stewardship of the installed rain gardens and vegetated buffers.

To foster regional collaboration, the gardens were featured as part of the Galveston Bay Coalition of Watersheds implementation, and updates were shared at coalition quarterly meetings. Project outcomes were shared at the State of the Bay Symposium in Galveston (February 2026), as a site-scale case study for the Envirothon Teachers Workshop (February 2026), and with the Green Infrastructure Career Development High School Intern Summer 2026 cohort. Project updates were shared with the Galveston Bay Estuary Program Water and Sediment Quality Subcommittee. Locally, project progress and upcoming activities were shared with the City of Hitchcock Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (February 2025).

These combined activities strengthened community support for native landscaping and water quality improvements in Hitchcock, and expanded awareness of the gardens and their benefits to a wider audience across the region.

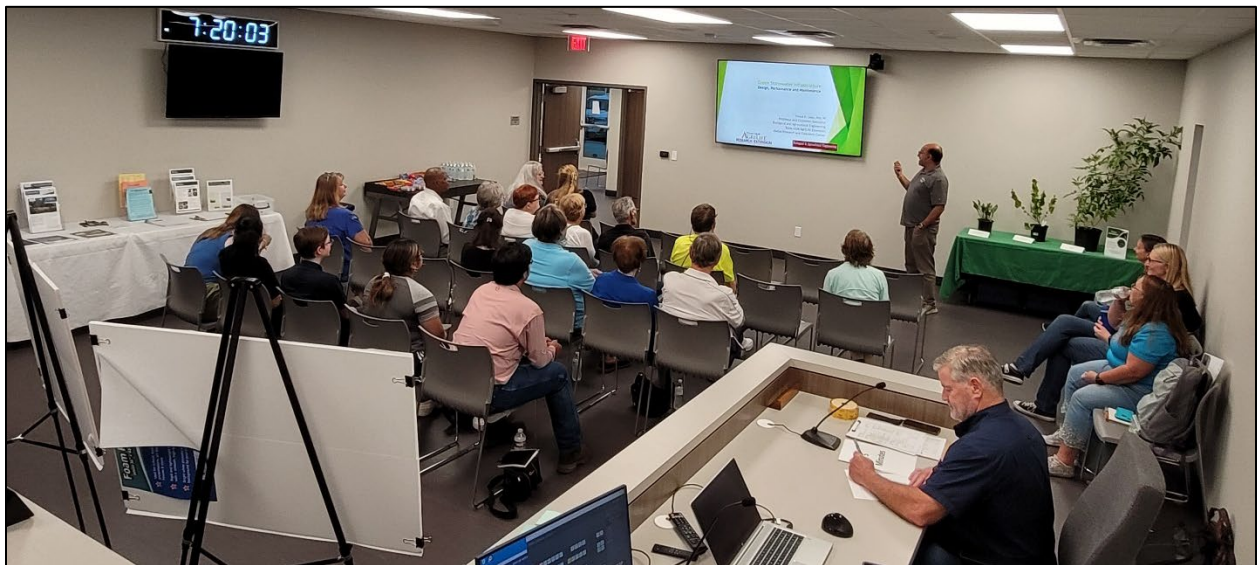
Completed activities:

- Green infrastructure workshop, September 26, 2024
- Fact sheet, October 2025
- Field day event, October 23, 2025
- Garden Visit and Maintenance Event, May 8, 2026
- Green Infrastructure Career Development High School Intern Maintenance Visit, June 12, 2026

Green Infrastructure in Landscaping Workshop | September 26, 2024

The Green Infrastructure in Landscaping workshop was attended by 20 participants, including staff from the City of Hitchcock, City of La Marque, Hitchcock Economic Development Corporation, La Marque Garden Club, University of Houston Coastal Center, and residents from the surrounding area. The multi-speaker agenda featured presentations by GIFT and the Dallas Research and Extension Center, covering topics such as water conservation, water quality, wildlife habitat, green infrastructure practices, design, performance, maintenance, and an overview of planned project activities, including upcoming volunteer planting events. Attendees had the opportunity to view detailed posters of the garden designs and plant selections, with Asakura Robinson in attendance to answer questions. Jimbo's, a local nursery, generously donated several native plants which were raffled off to participants during the workshop.

Resource materials were provided to support further learning. The workshop fostered lively discussion and community engagement, as reflected in the event evaluations: 90% of the 12 respondents completing the evaluation reported being mostly or completely satisfied, and 100% selected yes when asked if they would recommend this event to others.





Green infrastructure in LANDSCAPING

Join us and find out more about how landscaping can clean and conserve rainwater for people and wildlife. These approaches work in public spaces, private businesses, and your yard!

Local elected officials, board and commission members, business owners, and residents will benefit from attending.



SEPTEMBER 26 2024
6:30 - 8:30 PM
 LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

HITCHCOCK CITY HALL
 8102 HIGHWAY 6
 HITCHCOCK, TX, 77563

NO COST TO ATTEND BUT SEATING IS LIMITED
 REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

WORKSHOP TOPICS:

- What, why, and how to manage rainwater on-site.
- Design, installation, maintenance and plants.
- Water quality, water conservation, and wildlife benefits.
- Gardens Hitchcock is planning for your city parks.
- Nearby on-the-ground examples.

[Register Here](#) green-infrastructure-workshop.eventbrite.com



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Green infrastructure in LANDSCAPING

SEPTEMBER 26 2024
HITCHCOCK CITY HALL

6:30 - 6:40 PM **WELCOME**
 City of Hitchcock

6:40 - 6:55 PM **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN HITCHCOCK CITY PARKS**
 Celina Gauthier Lowry, Green Infrastructure for Texas Watershed Program Specialist
 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

6:55 - 7:30 PM **WHO'LL STOP THE RAIN? USING OUR LANDSCAPING TO COLLECT AND MANAGE RAINWATER.**
 Charriess York, Green Infrastructure for Texas Program Director
 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

7:30 - 8:15 PM **DESIGN, PERFORMANCE AND MAINTENANCE OF GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE**
 Fouad Jaber, Ph.D., PE, Biological and Agricultural Engineering Dept Professor and Extension Specialist
 Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

8:15 - 8:30 PM **WRAP UP**

Refreshments provided by the City of Hitchcock | Native plants provided by Jimco's Nursery



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City of Hitchcock

Newsletter September 2024

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The City of Hitchcock has violated the monitoring and reporting requirements set by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in Chapter 30, Section 290, Subchapter F. Even though these were not emergencies, as our customers, you have the right to know what happened and what we are doing (or did) to correct these situations.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During January 2024 to June 2024 we did not monitor or test for lead and copper and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time.

The table below lists the contaminant(s) we did not properly test for during the last year, how often we are supposed to sample for lead and copper, how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when samples should have been taken, and the date on which the follow-up samples were (or will be) taken.

Contaminant	Required sampling frequency	Number of samples taken	When samples should have been taken	When samples were or will be taken
Lead and copper tap water sampling	Jan. 24 - June 24	0 of 40	Jan. 24 - June 24	Jul. 24 - Dec. 24
Lead and Copper entry point sampling				
Water quality parameters				

What is being done?

We are working to correct the problem. For more information, please contact Ivan Robidoux at 409-739-0327 or 8102 Hwy 6 Hitchcock, TX 77563.

• **Monitoring and testing will be conducted during the July 24 to December 24 period.**

Please share this information with all other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (i.e. people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by The City of Hitchcock. Public Water System Number: TX 0840004

Date Distributed: 09/10/2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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CONTACT US.....4

DATES TO REMEMBER

9/16/2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 6:00 PM.
 9/24/2024 P & Z MEETING AT 6:00 PM.
 10/11 AND 10/12 2024 GOOD OLE DAYS EVENT

STAY INFORMED BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT www.cityofhitchcock.org





Fact Sheet | From Rain to Roots: How Native Gardens Can Protect Our Water in Hitchcock

A fact sheet, with a tri-fold brochure layout, was developed to provide information on native garden practices installed in Hitchcock city parks, specifically detailing rain gardens and vegetated buffers, their functions, recommended native plant options, and maintenance considerations. This resource was available at the field day event and is available for download online.¹



How do rain gardens and vegetated buffers help?

These specialized gardens use native plants to create a beautiful wildlife habitat that provides food and shelter for small critters. Native plants also attract birds, butterflies, and pollinators while requiring less maintenance than a grassy lawn (no mowing). These gardens help keep more rain where it falls, protect streams and bayous, and build healthier, more resilient landscapes by supporting deep roots and healthy soils that filter water, store moisture, and strengthen plant communities. Both protect water quality and add beauty to the landscape:

- Rain gardens hold water just long enough for it to soak into the soil, filtering out pollutants and reducing the amount of stormwater that flows off the property.
- Vegetated buffers slow water down, trap sediment and pollutants before they reach the water, and help stabilize stream banks against erosion.

Resources

- Green Infrastructure for Texas (GIFT) Rain Garden Plant List: <https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/rain-garden-plant-list-ver-2.pdf>
- Rain Garden design, construction, and maintenance: <https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/stormwater-management-rain-gardens/01t4x0000040Jx/AAK>
- WaterSmart Landscapes for the Upper Texas Coast: <https://watersmart.tamu.edu/>
- Austin's Watershed Protection's Rain Garden Fact Sheet: https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/growgreen/factsheets/raingarden_factsheet.pdf



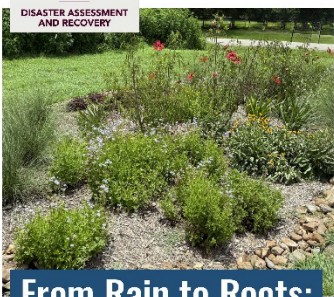
Scan for rain garden plant list!

<https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/rain-garden-plant-list-ver-2.pdf>



This project is funded in part by a Texas Coastal Management Program grant approved by the Texas Land Commissioner, providing financial assistance under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, awarded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management, pursuant to NOAA Award No. NA23NO54190249.

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From Rain to Roots: How Native Gardens Can Protect Our Water in Hitchcock

*Slow the water down and let it soak it in.
A natural filter for rainwater entering our bayous.*

Celina Gauthier Lowry
Watershed Program Specialist II, AgriLife Extension

Charriss York
Program Leader, Green Infrastructure for Texas, AgriLife Extension

Hitchcock Streets Connect to the Bayou and Galveston Bay

Rainwater that cannot soak into the ground flows into ditches and storm drains. Along the way, this water picks up litter, nutrients, and bacteria (all types of pollution) from streets and other surfaces. In the City of Hitchcock, this polluted water reaches Highland Bayou or the Diversion Canal and then ends up in Galveston Bay and the Gulf.

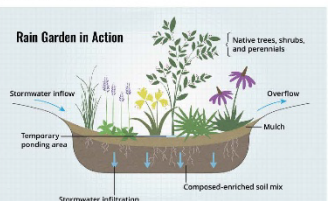
Rain Gardens

Joe Moore Park, 7067 Wilkins Street, Hitchcock, Texas

Rain garden: A bowl-shaped, planted area designed to collect, absorb, and filter stormwater, or rainwater, that runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and streets.

How does this rain garden work?

Stormwater from the land flows into the rain garden, where it pools and soaks into the soil. The soil, mulch, and plants filter out pollutants as the water infiltrates. During heavy rains, some water may overflow, but most of it is absorbed into the garden—keeping more rain where it falls.



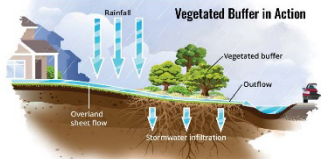
Vegetated Buffer

Hitchcock City Park (Hill Country Regional Field), 8704 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas

Vegetated buffer: A section of relatively flat land with native plants and a low slope that slows and filters stormwater that runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and streets.

How does this vegetated buffer work?

Stormwater flows across the land and through the vegetated buffer. The plants slow the flow and allow the water to soak into the soil. As the water moves through the vegetated buffer, the soil, plants, and mulch filter out pollutants. Any stormwater leaving the vegetated buffer is cleaner as it enters the drainage system.



What plants can be used?

Many types of native plants, including flowers, bushes, trees, grasses and vines, can grow in shady or sunny, and wet or dry conditions. For gardens designed to collect rainwater, native plants that thrive in both wet and dry conditions are best. These plants have extensive root systems that help water soak into the soil. They are also typically food sources for wildlife, attracting hummingbirds, songbirds, butterflies, and pollinators.

Consider water requirements when selecting plants for a garden. For rain gardens, plants in deeper areas must tolerate wet roots for short periods or time, typically 24 to 48 hours. Native plants like spider lilies, irises, and rushes can work well in these conditions and provide visual interest. Choose landscape plants that are well adapted to the amount of sunlight the flower bed receives.

Native plants are becoming easier to find at garden centers. Local nurseries often carry a wider variety than big box chains, making them a good place to look for Texas native plants.

Native Plant Options

WETTEST SOIL

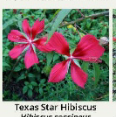



Southern Blue Flag Iris
Iris virginica Virginia Sweetspire
Thalictrum virginicum

WET-DRY SOIL








American Beautyberry
Callicarpa americana Buttonbush
Cephalanthus occidentalis Dwarf Palmetto
Sabal minor

Spider Lily
Hymenocallis littoralis Texas Star Hibiscus
Hibiscus coccineus Turk's Cap
Melvinia drummondii

DRIER SOIL




Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia hirta Gulf Muhly Grass
Muhlenbergia capillaris

¹ <https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/from-rain-to-roots-how-native-gardens-protect-our-water-in-hitchcock/01t4x0000040Jx/RIAR>

Field Day Event | October 23, 2025

The Field Day event provided an engaging opportunity with twelve community members participating in a tour of the native gardens at Joe Moore Park and Hitchcock City Park, showcasing how these gardens support pollinators, improve rainwater quality, and can be adapted for various spaces—from public parks to home yards. All ages were invited to participate in hands-on activities, including potting native flower seeds, exploring a rain garden tabletop aquarium display featuring a cross-section of a garden, and an infiltration demonstration comparing rain garden soil to typical Galveston County soil. Attendees also interacted with a "What watershed do you live in?" map and received educational resources such as the project-developed fact sheet, "From Rain to Roots: How Native Gardens Can Protect Our Water in Hitchcock," and a local watershed kids brochure with crosswords and activities. Additional learning stations featured education on fats, oils, and grease, natural ant control, native hardwood mulch and Microlife soil amendment on display, further encouraging sustainable practices. Plant lists were available for those interested in replicating garden features, and the event was held in the afternoon from 4 to 6 p.m., fostering accessibility for families and individuals alike. In addition to educational displays and hands-on activities, tables were hosted by Jimbo's, a local nursery, and the City of Hitchcock to provide additional outreach and resources. The City of Hitchcock provided a large tent at one location, along with chairs at both sites and staff on hand to assist participants, ensuring comfort and support throughout the event.

Additional outreach was conducted at Jimbo's Fall Festival Sip N Stroll, October 18, 2025, in collaboration with Keep Santa Fe Beautiful, sharing watershed education and promoting the upcoming Hitchcock garden event with the community. These combined activities and outreach efforts strengthened community awareness and involvement in green infrastructure, pollinator protection, and water quality practices through native gardening.

Garden Maintenance and Replacement Planting

Ahead of the Field Day, an inventory of existing plants revealed the need for replacements. Species no longer present included Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Penstemon (*Penstemon tenuis*), Blazing Star/Bee Balm (*Liatris spp.*), Cline Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*), and Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*). Only a few Blue Dart (*Juncus tenuis*) remained. Replacement plants were added to both gardens, including Penstemon (*Penstemon sp.*), Louisiana Iris (*Hexagona series* and *Iris fulva*), Crinum 'Stars and Stripes' lilies, Spider Lily (*Hymenocallis acutifolia*), and Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*) in Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens, and Black Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and multi-species Salvia (including Autumn Sage) in Hitchcock City Park vegetated Buffer.

Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas




Drop in and visit our New Gardens

Thursday, October 23 | 4 - 6 pm

Tour native gardens that care for pollinators, clean rainwater, and can be anywhere... from public spaces to your yard!

JOE MOORE PARK 7007 Williams Street Hitchcock, TX 77563	HITCHCOCK CITY PARK Little League Baseball Fields 8324 Robinson Rd Hitchcock, TX 77563
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FREE ENTRY - STOP IN ANYTIME

- Hands on activities
- Plant lists
- All ages welcome

ADD TO CALENDAR

Questions?
celina.lowry@ag.tamu.edu

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Hitchcock City Park Vegetated Buffer, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas



Garden Visit and Maintenance Event | May 8, 2026

During the garden visit and maintenance event, community members celebrated the one-year milestone of the Hitchcock Native Gardens. Six participated, touring two rain gardens at Joe Moore Park and a vegetated buffer at Hitchcock City Park.

As participants moved through the gardens, discussions and Q&A unfolded organically, with project team members providing insights at each stop. The group explored how the gardens were designed to improve water quality and create wildlife habitat for pollinators such as birds, butterflies, and insects. Over ten native plant species adapted to both wet and dry conditions were observed and highlighted in context, illustrating the gardens' role in building resilient landscapes with deep-rooted plants and minimal maintenance needs, like reduced mowing. Throughout the tour, team members answered questions and shared examples of how native plants support pollinator populations and contribute to cleaner rainwater in public spaces and neighborhood yards, making the learning process interactive and ongoing as each garden feature was experienced.

Hands-on activities allowed attendees to assist with garden care tasks like weeding and watering, and the event fostered connection among residents interested in native landscaping practices. All community members were welcome, and participants were encouraged to bring gloves, garden tools, and water, as shade on site is limited. The event promoted ongoing engagement and support for native gardens in Hitchcock.

Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas



Hitchcock City Park Vegetated Buffer, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas



Green Infrastructure Career Development High School Intern Maintenance Visit June 12, 2026

On a recent maintenance visit, five high school interns from the Green Infrastructure for Texas (GIFT) career development program joined staff at Hitchcock parks to support upkeep of the rain gardens and vegetated buffer. The group toured both sites, observed the native plant installations, and engaged in hands-on weeding. Due to recent rainfall, watering was not necessary, and City staff confirmed that there was no standing water prior to the visit—ensuring a safe and comfortable work environment. Garden tools were provided for the activity, and arrangements will be made to return them to the shop or City Hall. This informal visit gave interns practical insight into green infrastructure maintenance and the importance of native plant gardens in local parks

Joe Moore Park Rain Gardens, 7007 Williams St, Hitchcock, Texas



Hitchcock City Park Vegetated Buffer, 8324 Robinson Road, Hitchcock, Texas

